

Quick Strokes

Quick Strokes, Fall-Winter, 1974-75

#5

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Homage to August Dvorak

"Witty, soft-spoken" Professor August Dvorak was the guest of honor at a "lavish" press party in October, in the words of Don Duncan, managing editor of the Tacoma News Tribune. The professor, who is also Capt. Dvorak (USN-Ret.) and is known to readers as the inventor of the Simplified arrangement for alphanumeric keyboards, received an award in the form of a plaque, reading

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
presented to
Doctor August Dvorak

Author, educator and humanist whose lifelong multifaceted career has showered orderly benefits upon many fields of endeavor and need. Your Synergistic Writing is a major contribution to the arts and sciences of Alphabetic communication. Your rationalized typewriter keyboard is your Promethean gift which, when universally adopted will liberate the minds and hands of all who would express in words what they feel and know and yearn for.

In recognition of your creativity, your professional and civic generosity, your selfless service to your fellows, The Phonemic Spelling Council is honored to award to you its recognition of distinguished service.

Frank G. Jennings
Vice-president

Godfrey Dewey
Founder

The presentation was made by Ben D. Wood, Ph.D. (106 Morningside Drive, New York, NY 10027), representing the donors. The P.S.C. are leading advocates of a modified spelling for many common words which are hard for beginners in reading to "sound out" in the traditional orthography. Teachers who have applied this method report that it shortens the line of pupils, book in hand, waiting to ask, "Teacher, what is this word?" When the primary pupils can read the special spelling, the transition to traditional spelling is easy, according to reports.

Hosts were the SCM Corporation, in the person of Arthur P. Wales, vice-president for the Executive line of consumer products. He announced the availability of a Simplified arrangement on four models of SCM typewriters, including two with the much-wanted feature of the ribbon in a cartridge. Although all the characters of an incidence above one per thousand are the same as what has long been known as the Dvorak Simplified arrangement, it differs enough to make it convenient to use another term for it—ASK, for American Simplified Keyboard.

Two well-trained operators, the McCauley sisters, Kelly and Marlo, thirteen and nine years old, from Manhattan Beach, California, impressed the press with their performances at a Simplified keyboard.

The party was held at the Space Needle in Seattle, and wire services, television, and radio carried the story all along the West Coast. The Tacoma local angle is brought out in the New Tribune story in a reference to the application of the Simplified arrangement which once was made in the city schools there, for teaching both typing and grammar at the same time, in classrooms with a typewriter on every desk. The students, seventh graders, learned more grammar than the

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Try on your Simplified machine the following: He has nineteen tenants at Taunton, ten in a house on the east side and nine in one in the east end.

Try, on your Simplified keyboard,
He insists that he intends to see to it that she is his assistant as soon as she has assented to it.

control group and had their Simplified-arrangement typing skill as a bonus.

ASK was devised by Joseph Rosenblum, consultant on product planning for the Smith-Corona Laboratory, Cortland, N. Y. By retaining the pairs of characters on slugs which SCM stocks routinely, the Rosenblum ASK permits quicker delivery of Simplified-arrangement typewriters. It is almost identical to the arrangement on which Barbara Blackburn, world's fastest secretary, of Lees's Summit, Mo., defends her title at sustained speeds of 150 to 160 words per minute.

Vocational habilitation

Mrs. Jack Levine, of Irvington, New Jersey, a self-retrained former "qwerty" operator, has in the last two years become a competent operator on a Simplified arrangement and has, as an application specialist, shipped numerous Simplified typewriters to customers mostly in distant places like Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Florida, Illinois, and Japan.

"My handicap," says Mrs. Levine (Betty), "which is congenital total blindness, has bothered me very little in learning the Simplified arrangement. I already knew the positions of the keybuttons, and it was simply a question of learning the new character locations, and that part is really easy. I never used "qwerty" for business correspondence, because my errors were too frequent. On my Simplified-keyboard typewriter, I now write up to a dozen letters a day, if business is that good, and some of them are without error."

Peripatetic apostrophe

Quick Strokes 4 was not in error in its SCM-copyrighted diagram for the ASK arrangement. SCM will not be in error in advertising a different location for the apostrophe-ditto pair and another for the semicolon-colon pair. The change in the diagram, placing apostrophe at B01, assigned to the left little finger in the bottom rank, was made for the convenience of the operator, which is the whole point of Simplified arrangements. B01 is not a particularly easy reach—it does not have to be particularly easy because apostrophe is a stroke of low incidence. Nevertheless, because apostrophe occurs before or after r, l, s, n, and t—all right-hand strokes for good reasons—and hardly ever, in English, in association with anything else, it makes sense to preserve right-left hand alternation by locating it in that spot and relegating semicolon to the vacancy.

Switching

No experienced operator need hesitate to accept an opportunity to retrain on a Simplified arrangement. You will learn the new arrangement a great deal faster than a nonoperator beginner; your ability to cope at all with the excessively difficult "qwerty" assures you that your talent is adequate; and if you only persevere, you are assured of surpassing your old score and turning in a consistently better performance on the job than the best you would ever do on "qwerty".



B. Levine at her
Simplified SCM Electra 120

Students and schools

A student in possession of a Simplified-arrangement typewriter occupies the catbird seat. Yes, you can learn to type on it by yourself, but why should you? Everything the qwerty teacher teaches, except the arrangement of the characters, applies to Simplified typing, and independent study, although it works well, does not work as well as drill in class, with a teacher.

Simply tell your teacher that you intend to provide your own machine and your own manual. Dictated exercises of the a, s, d, f, type are simply noise in the room as far as you are concerned, and noise in the room ought to be regarded as a help and not a hindrance. One of the things you have to learn is how to concentrate in spite of distractions.

The classroom teacher has enough authority to admit you; it should never be necessary to go over his head. If it is, though, do it. There is justice at some level, and no authority is really final except the state superintendent or commissioner of education.

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